

We would remind our readers of the performance in the City Hall to-night by the Imperial Ching Lin Foo troupe of magicians from Peking.

At the Magistracy to-day a coolie who had been convicted before Mr. Wodehouse of stealing two fowls belonging to Mr. N. N. J. Ezra, Victoria Park, was sent to prison for three months.

We note that the departure of the O. & O. a.s. Oceanic for San Francisco, is postponed from Tuesday (13th) to Thursday, the 20th instant, at 1 p.m. She has had to get the news of her tail-shaft renewed; hence the two days' delay.

The Band of the 1st Shropshire I. L. will play the following programme on the Barrack Square this evening, commencing at 7.30—

Polka. "Spirally." Smith.
Gavotte. "The Rose Tree." Smith.
Waltz. "The Rose Tree." Smith.
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Waltz. "The Rose Tree." Smith.

While a servant boy belonging to the Naval Sanatorium was gathering ferns on the hillside yesterday in the valley between Victoria Peak and Mount Kellett, he discovered the body of a Chinaman in an advanced stage of decomposition. The matter was reported to the police, who had the body buried. There are no suspicious circumstances.

Ballet dancing is, it is said, becoming quite a fashionable accomplishment among the ladies of the United States. The last ballet and tumbler dances are great favourites among the amateurs, who acquire an almost professional skill. Other varieties are the serpentine, the Amazon march, and the Russian dance.

The Government of India have sanctioned the employment of females as composers, a class which has been started by the Superintendent of Government Printing in the branch printing office at Bangalore, Calcutta. A large detached room has been set apart for these workers, who are under the instruction of an aged European woman. More than twenty applications have already been received from European and Indian girls. The rates of payment will be the same as are allowed to men, on the piece system, full earnings being given from the very commencement.

Lady Butler, who is staying at Alexander, has completed another picture; and recently exhibited it to a crowd of friends at St. James'. The picture, which is entitled "The Camel Corps," depicts a charge of camels in the Sudan. It is, as was to be expected, thoroughly realistic. Camels and riders are true to nature; and the picture tells its story in a manner which appeals to the eye and the imagination. Nearly all the visiting community were present at the exhibition, and the painting was greatly admired. In due course it will find its way to the Academy, and is likely to prove one of the best pictures of the year.

Some time since the Admiralty invited competitive designs for mounting a pair of fifty-ton guns in the batteries of the new battleships which it is proposed to build. It has since been announced that they have accepted that of the Armstrong Company at Elswick. The new design embraces a number of novelties and improvements of the most important order. It will be possible to fire both guns at intervals not exceeding 14 minutes, and every operation can be performed by hand as an alternative. Moreover, the guns can be hoisted in any position or a fixed position. Consequently if one gun only has been fired it can be reloaded, although the other gun is being kept beating on the object. Further advantages promised are superior protection given to the guns and crew. It is also stated that it has been found possible to reduce proportional horse-power of the hydraulic pumps to a very great extent.

An alleged discovery at Naples of a beautiful authentic portrait by Titian of Christopher Columbus has caused a great sensation there. A correspondent writes: "The full-length life-size portrait was shown to a select circle of artists and connoisseurs, who purchased it from Count Albriciandi at Bologna. The whole, with the exception of the face and hands, had been carefully painted over. This extraneous coat being removed, the figure in the uniform of a Spanish admiral was revealed. The pose and coloring are very quiet; the face that of a man with hair just turning grey. The eyes are blue, thoughtful, and even sad; the mouth is firmly set, and he wears a pinkish, blonde beard and mustache. On the tapering fingers are three massive rings. The canvas is of a peculiar twisted kind. Signor Canavatta possesses documents which vouch for the authenticity of the picture. It is to be sent for exhibition to Chicago."

By the eleven o'clock Continental train from Charing Cross Station on March 4 the Duchess of Devonshire travelled on the way to Monte Carlo. There was a huge battle at the station at the time, for 15 minutes after eleven the Princess of Wales also went away to the Continent. The two trains starting within five minutes of one another left from different stations. The Duke of Devonshire came with the Duchess to the station. Her grace took with her a good deal of baggage, and had also a number of small packages, which her footmen and maid carried from the carriage to the train. Among these smaller articles was a small green leather case, locked and strapped, an article which would not take an expert thief to identify as a jewel case. This was in particular charge of her grace's maid. A footman carried it to the train, and put it under the maid's feet in one of the first-class cars. A minute before the train started the maid called out, "This jewel-case has gone." A hasty search was made; but it was true. The green leather jewel-case had gone. No one saw any suspicious persons about. But without doubt a gang of high class thieves had brought off a grand coup, for which they had been plotting and scheming and watching perhaps for months. They had not clear off the Duchess's jewel-case; containing, no doubt, many of the wonderful family jewels. But, as a matter of fact, the case contained only some recent bottles with silver-top and a spirit lamp. The total value of the haul of one of the greatest criminal exploits of the century was, to make a liberal estimate, £10.

The London correspondent of the *Times* says he has been "let into a very important secret this evening, and that is that Lord Brassey has been approached with a view of his taking an important Government ship in the Colonies. Lord Brassey has travelled the wide world over, and knows the Colonies by heart, every inlet and creek having been visited by him with the late Lady Brassey in the *Sunderland*. Where he goes I am only allowed to guess, but it will probably be to Canada, in place of Lord Stanley of Preston, who returned in August. Every one believed Lord Aberdeen would go there, but the latter much prefers India, in place of Lord Lansdowne, who comes in about the same time."

In a remarkable brochure, "Bimetallism and Monometallism" (Dublin: Browne and Nolan), the Archbishop of Dublin has revised and extended the account of an interview with him on the subject of the hearing of the currency problem on the Irish Land Question, which was originally published in the *Freeman's Journal*. He has also taken great pains to give precise references to the evidence which he quotes. The statements, which it will be remembered, were made during the sittings of the Currency Commission, are remarkable, and would undoubtedly have carried weight with the Irish members in the late Currency Debate in the House of Commons had the Government not made the matter a party question and issued a strong whip to their supporters. Archbishop Walsh speaks out to the original statements so as to make his opinion more complete, and to afford a better understanding to those not practically acquainted with the subject.

CONCERT AT THE CITY HALL.

The rather meagre attendance at the concert given by pupils of Signor Cattaneo last night, in aid of the furnishing of the Netherdale Hospital, must be taken as a proof of the lack of appreciation of classical music in Hongkong rather than as an indication of a want of public interest in the object for which the entertainment was given.

Whatever may be said of the fact that the Hongkong public prefer "Tartar-Boom-de-ay" to anything from what is called "Grand Opera," there can be no doubt that such is the fact. In bygone years, concerts by Signor Cattaneo's pupils used to be by no means rare events, but it is quite a long time since the music-loving portion of the community have had an opportunity of enjoying such an entertainment. Last night's concert, although not in all respects an unqualified success, was very enjoyable. The selection from "Marta" with which the programme commenced, was very well rendered, notwithstanding the fact that in the two choruses, "Sing pretty maidens" and the "Angels' men's voices, particularly in the bass part, were hardly heard at all. Mrs. McCallum was heard to great advantage in the romances "It was a Knight," her singing being particularly notable for the richness and power of her upper notes. Mrs. Kjeller, who, we believe, is new to the concert platform, sang "The harp in the air" and gave unmistakable evidence of the possession of a soprano voice of very good quality, the compass and power of which were still more convincingly demonstrated in the solo from "Roberto il Diavolo" which she sang at a later stage of the programme. Mr. J. F. Krahl's robust and sonorous bass voice was heard with fine effect in the aria "Dispersa son vidi" from Les Huguenots. The beautiful duet "Quis est Homo" from Rossini's "Stabat Mater" was admirably sung by Mrs. Coxon and Mrs. Gordon. A piano solo by Miss C. de Souza was one of the most acceptable items in the programme. Miss E. Carvalho, one of the accomplished vocalists of whom the colony can boast, gave a fine exhibition of her technical skill in the grand aria and cabaletta from "La Traviata." Mr. Charles Lammet was in his very best form in the favourite tenor ballad "I'll sing the songs of Arabia," and but for the rule of "no encores" would certainly have been recalled. Mr. G. S. Coxon's singing never fails to win enthusiastic appreciation. In the aria from "I Puritani" which she sang last night her rich and highly-cultivated voice was heard with charming effect. The "Ave Maria" composed by Macfarlane was one of the most interesting items in the programme and met with very hearty appreciation. Mr. Charles Holliday sang the bass solo, and although he was not in his best voice he gave a good account of the music. The choruses were somewhat too loud and rather marred the effect of the music in some places, but the piece was listened to with much pleasure, and the very hearty applause which followed it was a gratification to which the composer was fully entitled.

The *Misericordia* duet from "Il Trovatore" by Miss Carvalho and Mr. Lammet was excellently sung. Mr. Grace's solo from "Un Ballo in Maschera" was a very enjoyable item, although the vocalist was not quite in his best form. Mr. F. J. East sang the solo "Come gente sleep" from "Ivanhoe," and showed that he possesses a tenor voice of good quality and compass. Miss F. D. Guedes thoroughly deserved the enthusiastic applause which she gained for her charming singing of the Habanera and Bolero by Yradier and Arditi. Signor Cattaneo's very pleasant waltz, "From the Pacific to the Atlantic" was played by Mr. Murphy. Mr. Rudwaldy (violin) and Signor Cattaneo (piano) and was loudly applauded.

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THE STORAGE OF PETROLEUM AT SHAMSHUIPO.

III.

We have already given a brief account of the rise and development of the kerosine oil trade and of the method of carriage and storage in bulk that has been generally adopted, and have discussed some of the dangers attached to the trade and how these dangers may be avoided or minimized. In doing so we have confined our remarks entirely to bulk storage and bulk carriage. Now the fact must not be lost sight of that the carriage of petroleum or refined oil like kerosine in tins or barrels and the storage of these in godowns not removed like the tanks from the centre of civilization are not absolutely devoid of danger. It has been pointed out over and over again by those who have had to defend the new system that kerosine tins are not free from leakage, and anyone who has seen the transshipment of large consignments of this illuminant must have observed that the wooden cases were often saturated with oil. In this there was no doubt the slightest danger. If there is no danger in it, then the case for bulk storage is made all the stronger. There are less people handling the oil, it is being taken direct from the ships to the tanks in carefully constructed pipes, more complete precautions are taken to prevent leakage, and the ships and tanks are generally—though not always in England—placed at some distance from ordinary traffic and centres of population.

In Singapore, the precautions taken against serious conflagration are extreme. At that port the amount of petroleum, &c., imported in 1890 was 829,267 cases, and though the oil imported into Singapore is mostly distributed throughout Sumatra, Sarawak, Dutch Borneo, and Siam, the figures in 1891 had fallen to 700,688 cases—a decrease of 121,681 cases. So long as the oil is imported in cases no great danger appears to have been anticipated. But as soon as it was proposed to store the kerosine in bulk, there was the usual outcry, and the tanks had to be erected some distance away on Pulau Bukom. Fortunately for the promoters of the bulk storage system in Hongkong, a favourable view was taken of the proposal by those in authority, and while the installation has been placed on a fairly remote portion of the Colony it is not so far removed to be inconvenient. It must not be assumed that this concession was made without a good deal of consideration. The bulk importers were met with opposition from various sources. This is not to be wondered at, and no grounds for dissatisfaction would exist if the opposition were confined merely to the competition of the oil left in the pipe from escaping. This is a very important provision, and when taken along with Section 10, shows how little risk is run if the discharging takes place under ordinary climatic conditions, assuming always faithfulness to duty on the part of the officer and servants entrusted with the work. Section 10 is in the following terms:—"During the time that any tank ship is moored or made fast alongside the said wharf two certificated officers of the ship of whom one shall be a deck officer shall remain on board and the ship shall be protected on her 'off' side by means of strong (ropes) approved by the Harbour Master" and so—secured as to fend off any other vessel from possible collision with her. This throwing of petroleum in the waters of the Colony is prohibited against, but we have heard it suggested, and the suggestion is given for what it is worth, the some floating structure should be placed in the Harbour, isolating the ship and wharf, as an additional precaution in the case of fire on board the ship or while the work of discharging is going on. There will never be more than one vessel of any description at the wharf; and the discharge or shipment of petroleum from or on any one tank ship shall not occupy more than 24 working hours, unless the time has been extended by the Harbour Master owing to stress of weather or accidental cause."

With very rare exceptions the so-called Asiatic marriage between American women and Englishmen turn out very badly, says the *Illustrated American*. That some Englishmen do not marry to get hold of money to squander is probably true; but that most marriages between the people of the two countries are purely a matter of money the statistics of the last half century prove. Englishmen who do not care for the money of the women who do not care for the money of the men are rare. But, in spite of very fine manners and in some cases most winning graces, the Englishman, in general, is not a good husband. He is not a good father, and he is not a good friend. He is not a good neighbor, and he is not a good citizen. He is not a good man, and he is not a good woman. He is not a good child, and he is not a good parent. He is not a good son, and he is not a good daughter. He is not a good brother, and he is not a good sister. He is not a good friend, and he is not a good enemy. 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